# ARIZONA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILIES PLANNING COUNCIL

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



# BRIDGE BUILDERS

We are bridge builders. We seek out and find the best. most innovative projects and give them a boost, providing vital support that can be life-changing for thousands of Arizonans with developmental disabilities. We are a policy leader, highlighting gaps that are really just opportunities for the passionate, for the curious, for the determined—and we're all about knitting together services for people who often go unnoticed. We serve as champions of projects that are impacting Arizona and transforming its systems.

In 2016, we renewed our Council's focus on promoting

employment opportunities and encouraging people to advocate for themselves. And after traveling the state and listening to urban and rural self-advocates, parents, teachers, providers and professionals, we added a new goal: community inclusion.

#### Who We Are

A staff of five assists the all-volunteer Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, which is made up of individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, providers and state agency representatives. The

23-member Council meets bimonthly to discuss issues and vote on which projects to support by allocating federal funds.

#### What We Do

We serve Arizona residents with developmental disabilities and their families by providing grants, education, original research, and by fostering advocacybuilding in the community. This helps us to accomplish our three goals: employment, self-advocacy, and inclusion.

Advocates gather at the Arizona State Capitol to meet with their elected officials and speak up about rights for Arizonans with disabilities.



## WE LISTEN

With Council funding to Arizona State University Morrison Institute, more than 200 people participated in the statewide Partners for Progress Tour in the spring of 2016.

From Tuba City to Tucson, local residents shared issues they face every day, from the struggles in special education classrooms to simply trying to get attention for people with disabilities from community leaders. This input helped formulate ideas the Council used in order to create three goals on which to focus for the next five years: increasing employment opportunities, encouraging individuals to advocate for themselves and promoting community inclusion.





Members of the Latino Parents Organization of Southern Arizona shared input on Council projects at the Tucson forum.

## WE TRANSFORM

## Project Highlight: Positive Behaviors and Intervention Supports

Lately, eight-year-old Aylin has noticed a change at Tomahawk Elementary School in the west Phoenix village of Maryvale. "Not a lot of people getting in trouble," she explains. "You get a warning and my teacher talks about the PBIS."

Those letters stand for Positive Behaviors and Intervention Supports, a framework for schools to reduce problem behaviors and promote positive discipline. Praising students when they do well and limiting restraints and seclusion so everyone feels safe and secure are large parts of the PBIS goal. In 2016, the Council provided

program funding to Northern Arizona University, Institute to Human Development, to fund four elementary school districts—Yuma, Madison, Phoenix and Cartwright, which oversees Tomahawk Elementary.

When Tomahawk teachers see students being safe, responsible, and respectful, they hand out "Bee Bucks" that kids cash in for prizes at the school store or for extra recess or prizes at the school store.

Teacher Amy Poling uses the system with her secondgraders. "I've had some really challenging students that have benefitted from clear expectations," she says.

And Principal Marilyn Bond raves about PBIS. She saw

an almost 50 percent drop in disciplinary visits to her office from the previous school year, and a 37 percent decrease in the number of students visiting. Some student behaviors have been eliminated completely.

The key is complete buyin from school leadership, district support and strong data collection. One parent emailed the principal to thank her for Tomahawk's supportive culture. Her son with autism is no longer bullied since switching to the PBIS school.

"The difference is huge," Bond says. "PBIS has brought a common language to Tomahawk. It's pretty amazing."



Approximately 18,765 students reaped the benefit of Council-funded PBIS projects



The PBISAz Awards process saw a significant increase in applications and awards, from 40 in 2015 to 68 in 2016.

# WE EDUCATE



WATCH:
YOU CAN FIND COUNCIL
WEBINAR SESSIONS AT
http://bit.ly/2mdwY3i



Webinar Trainings Tackle Subjects Like Service Animals, Guardianship and Foster Care

Sometimes building bridges takes a digital turn. The Council launched a webinar series in 2016 to shine a spotlight on popular questions and important topics. Service animals in the public sphere, guardianship and its alternative options, and aging out of foster care were all highlighted subjects, drawing in audiences from across the state for the live events. Each session featured a panel of experts—individuals with disabilities, parents and professionals—who offered information and tools, and answered questions from audience members. It was another great partnership. Staffers from the Council and the Institute for Human Development at Northern Arizona University served as the production team. More than 190 people participated in the live webinars and each of the four sessions was recorded, allowing viewing access for those who were unable to engage live.

Service animals at the Arizona State Capitol rest at a hearing with their handlers.

# WE PARTNER

#### **Project Spotlight: Arizona DD Network**

The City of Peoria, a booming Phoenix suburb with 160,000 residents, reached out to the Council to offer a disability-focused seminar at City Hall. We brought along DD Network partners Arizona Center for Disability Law and Northern Arizona University's Assistive Technology Program for a hands-on presentation on useful devices and service animals. As a bonus, Peoria's own Adaptive Recreation activity director joined in, too. Reaching residents and city officials who may not be plugged in to the disability community proved invaluable. The Council also partnered with DD Network organizations throughout the year to host webinars and update a legal options manual.

Top picture: An audience member tries out an assistive vision device at a Peoria SUPPORT Awareness Seminar.

Bottom picture: The Council created a workshop that brought together city officials and residents to learn about disability resources in Peoria.





## **WE TRAIN**

## Project Spotlight: AZ Partners in Leadership

When Kristi Wolford moved to Prescott Valley with her family from California, she discovered a shortage of resources to assist children with disabilities in their new home, which impacted her two daughters with developmental disabilities and special medical needs.

Not one to sit back in times of challenge, Kristi recently launched a business helping youth and adults with cognitive, emotional and physical disabilities. She teaches job-readiness skills to obtain employment and wanted to plunge deeper



into learning how Arizona's service system works.

That led her to AZ Partners in Leadership, a training program for people with disabilities, family members, and disability professionals that teaches advocacy and leadership.

The group met in Phoenix once a month for the first half of the year in two-day trainings. Kristi soon learned valuable tools to bring back and bolster the service-hungry Yavapai County area. The program is coordinated by Tucson-based Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona. which wrapped up its fifth year of successful Councilfunded training in 2016.

The connections Kristi made at the trainings have already translated into real impact.

"We stay connected, we provide a lot of resources and share with each other," Kristi said. "I have a new friend; I'm actually providing services to her son now."

As a direct result of her advocacy training, Kristi also launched several transition fairs and created a Facebook group called "Prescott Area Special Needs" to connect local families across the rural region struggling for help.

"When I look back over the things that I've professionally accomplished, or am starting to, I am completely amazed," she said. "I have to say that I attribute it to the Parents in Leadership classes I've been taking. I have made amazing connections, both with the fellow parent participants and with the speakers."

Anya learns work readiness skills in Prescott Valley from Achieve Employment Services. The organization has blossomed thanks to CEO Kristi Wolford's training through AZ Partners in Leadership.

## COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ray Morris - Chair, Parent

John Black - Vice-Chair, Advocate

Monica Cooper Self-advocate

**Andrew Robinson** Self-advocate

**Traci Gruenberger**Nonprofit Organization
Representative, Mosaic

**David Copins** Self-advocate

Melissa Van Hook Parent John Eckhardt

Parent

Jamie Edgin

University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Representative, University of Arizona

**George Garcia** Self-advocate

**Angelina James**Parent

Laura Love

Division of Developmental Disabilities Representative

J.J. Rico

Protection and Advocacy Agency Representative, Arizona Center for Disability Law **Charles Ryan** 

Parent

Tom Uno

University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Representative, Northern Arizona University

Katharine Levandowsky

Department of Health Services Representative

**Janna Murrell** Parent

Jason Snead Self-advocate

Madeline Corzine Self-advocate

## **EXPANDING OUR REACH**

#### **Social Media Statistics**



34% Increase in Twitter Followers www.twitter.com/AzDDPC



37% Increase in Facebook Likes www.facebook.com/ADDPC

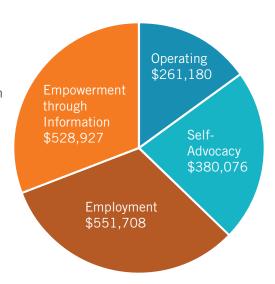


20% Increase in Email Sign-ups www.azdes.gov/ADDPC

#### Federal 2016 Expenditures per Goal Area

In 2016, the Council spent \$1,721,892 in federal funding to support programs and operations.

The distribution of funding per each of the Council's three goal areas is reflected in the graph.



### **ONE Community Working Together**

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